



United Church of God *an International Association*

eNews from Ministerial and Member Services

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Personal From the President...

Pentecost

The 50-day countdown to Pentecost has 38 days to go. On this day almost 2,000 years ago, the Church of God, which had only 120 assembled followers, took a quantum leap in confidence, power, numbers and influence. 3,000 were baptized on Pentecost, and in a short time the Church grew to 5,000.

What happened? What can we learn?

On Pentecost, God showed His approval for the fledgling group of Christ's followers by pouring out His power on His assembled disciples. In his sermon on that day, which was a tipping point for the Church, Peter quoted Joel's prophecy, which he ascribed to the events of that day: "And it shall come to pass in the last days," says God, "that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17-18).

The Church of God was granted a booming voice that would spread the gospel beyond Jerusalem to Asia Minor, Europe and the "ends of the earth." The special outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God made it all possible. It inspired speakers and cleared obstacles. The Church started from a mustard seed to become a viable force that could not be stopped. You and I are products of this message!

But it was only through the working of the power of the Holy Spirit that the big increases came. The prophet Joel makes that clear. It was God's time to fulfill a special purpose for the gospel to make its mark on the world. The book of Acts and the epistles of Paul give us that insight into the growth of the Church in the first century.

I am heartened by the events of Pentecost and the establishment of the New Testament Church. Christ's ministry by itself drew only a few committed followers. Then, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, the growth began.

Another instance referring to the changing power of the Holy Spirit is in Zechariah 4. The captive Jews returned from captivity in Babylon back to Judea. Their desire was to rebuild the destroyed Temple of God. But they were greeted with opposition. The captives felt helpless. The reconstruction project seemed impossible. The prophet Zechariah encouraged the people

not to lose heart, but to look to the power of the Holy Spirit of God rather than their own strength. This would make the difference between failure and success. “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6). “Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ‘The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. For who has despised the day of small things?’” (Zechariah 4:9).

The building project eventually succeeded, and the Temple became a structure that was used for hundreds of years before being destroyed by the Romans.

Here we learn to take heart in the encouragement that’s possible through the working of the mighty Spirit of God. We can feel small and insignificant, but that does not mean that God won’t make our efforts succeed for His purpose.

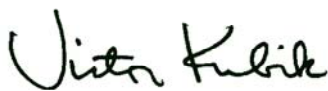
The power of the Spirit of God is first mentioned in the second verse of the Bible: “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2).

It is that same Spirit that came into the Church on Pentecost. It is the same Spirit that comes to us who come to repentance as was preached by the apostle Peter: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38-39). That Spirit gives us power we had not had before to live a transformed life pleasing to God.

God is very much with the Church today, in spite of its size. John writes this in his message to the church in Philadelphia: “These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens’: ‘I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth’” (Revelation 3:7-10).

The Day of Pentecost is a day of great encouragement as it points to the power of God working in creation, the Church and in our lives.

In Christ’s service,



Victor Kubik

Feast Announcement April 10, 2021

This Sunday, April 11, online Feast registration begins at 11 a.m. EDT. The ongoing coronavirus implications should be carefully considered in your planning and financial commitments. The Church will proceed with normal plans, but there are three major areas to

consider.

(1) Registration

We recommend that if you know where you plan to attend that you register for that Feast site as you normally would. This will help the Church in planning. However, it is not necessary to register on opening day. If a site fills up, we will be quickly opening up a wait list—so check back to add your registration to the wait list. At this time, some of the sites have reduced capacity to help with social distancing, if that remains necessary at Feast time.

St. George, Utah, will now be a site in the southwest. It is not listed in the Festival Planning Brochure, but it will be listed online and will be available for registration.

Lake Junaluska Property Rentals: Please call the toll-free number for reservations. The direct line listed in Feast Planning Brochure is incorrect, but the information online is fine.

(2) Housing Reservations

Early housing reservations begin on Sunday, April 11, for those who qualify. General housing reservations begin on Sunday, April 18.

Hotel reservations normally only require a one or two-night deposit, and cancellation is usually without penalty until within a week of the Feast.

Condominiums and homes normally require higher initial deposits and some are not refundable. Carefully review the cancellation policies of any condominium or homes before committing a deposit.

(3) Airfare

There might be some great deals right now, but be sure you understand the cancellation policy. If an airline provides cancellation insurance, make sure of the allowable parameters to receive a refund. Coronavirus might not be included.

April 11 (Sunday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Festival registration • Early housing begins (except for Panama City Beach, Lake Junaluska)
April 13 (Tuesday)	Early housing begins at Panama City Beach and Lake Junaluska
April 18 (Sunday)	General housing begins for U.S. & Canada (except for Panama City Beach and Lake Junaluska)
April 20 (Tuesday)	General housing begins at Panama City Beach and Lake Junaluska

United Youth Camps—Hye Sierra, CA

(please announce in all U.S congregations)

COVID-19 rates are decreasing in California, so the owner of the Hye Sierra camp facility is more positive about opening their camp to us. However, in case the Hye Sierra location is not available, we are looking at some excellent camp facilities in the Prescott, Arizona, area. May 1 is our deadline for confirming the camp location. Important: Please continue to apply if you want to be a part of Camp Hye Sierra in either California or Arizona. Staff and camper acceptances begin the week of May 2. We really look forward to having camp in the Southwest this summer. Thank you for your prayers.

—Ben Light, director, Camp Hye Sierra

GCE 2021 Sabbath Services – May 1

A live webcast of Sabbath services will be provided on the Sabbath of May 1, at 2:30 EDT. Split sermons will be given by President Vic Kubik and Treasurer Rick Shabi. Their messages will be addressed to the whole Church.

Inside United Podcast



Steven Britt—DNA

The relationship between science and Christianity is often hostile, but Victor Kubik and his guest, Steven Britt, show that it can be complementary in this conversation about the impressive complexity of DNA. This conversation, which originally aired as a two-part episode, has been revised and re-edited into a single release.

<https://www.ucg.org/inside-united-podcast/inside-united-podcast-198-steven-britt-dna>

Send us your questions, comments, or suggestions at podcast@ucg.org.

Listen to past episodes: <https://www.ucg.org/inside-united-podcast>

Congregation Website Support Email

Attention pastors and local congregation website maintainers: To simplify the process of supporting your congregation websites, we have established a new email address: congregation_support@ucg.org. If you have any problems, questions or inquiries regarding maintaining your local congregation website, please be sure to use this new email address.

Thank you!

—Media and Communications Services

Zambia Pastor Recovering From Accident

Elder Alfred Siame, pastor of the remote Isoka and Kalukanya congregations in northeast Zambia, was hit by a drunk driver and broke both bones in one leg. The accident occurred on Jan. 18, 2021, while he was on a motorcycle. I've asked Mr. Siame to write this report:

“I went to the farm to sell my fresh groundnuts and, after the transaction, we started off to my home. Before reaching home, we met a drunk who took the whole road. I tried to avoid him but to no avail. I hit him. Thereafter, the motorcycle fell on my leg and the two bones broke. The driver of the other vehicle walked away.



My wife Edith and me, along with our sixth-born son, Mukundanji, who took us to the Italian hospital in Lusaka and brought us back to Isoka.

“I was taken to the Isoka hospital, where the medical personnel advised me go 1,000 km away to the Italian hospital in Lusaka. I'm indebted to the Church and LifeNets who footed the bill for my treatment. I was treated on Feb. 1. A plate and nine screws were inserted to tighten the bones. I began walking with a walker, crutches and now I'm on one crutch. God willing, I will be walking soon without anything. I would like to thank elder

Talama and his family, elder Filius Jere and his wife, deaconess Phiri and her husband who took their time to visit us. I thank Mrs. Kubik and elder Pringle and wife who helped us financially. I was ordained in 2014 in Lusaka by the late Wilson Nkhoma and Major Talama. I thank God for His protection and healing. God will never leave us.”

—Alfred and Edith Siame

To have a glimpse of some of the activities in these congregations, follow these links:

- <https://kubik.org/2019-festival-in-kalukanya-zambia/>
- <https://kubik.org/womena-enrichment-weekend-15-18-july-2020-isoka-zambia/>

Please pray for him, his family and the congregations. You can write to him at:

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—Victor Kubik

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